



Comhairle Contae Mhaigh Eo
Mayo County Council



MIGRANT INTEGRATION STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

2022-2026

November 2021



Message from Cathaoirleach

As Cathaoirleach of Mayo County Council, I welcome the publication of this strategy which sets out our county's plan to ensure the integration of all the people who have come to live in Mayo from around the world. These people have enriched our County in many ways including culture, business, community activities, sport and perhaps most importantly through basic human friendships.

This strategy and action plan will ensure that the successful initiatives already established in our communities promote social cohesion and will continue to be developed to meet the needs of migrants living in Mayo.

This strategy conveys Mayo County Council's continued commitment to migrants living in Mayo. We will continue to enhance the quality of life experienced by migrants living in our beautiful County and I look forward to seeing the positive impact that this strategy will have on all of us.

Cllr. Michael Smyth

Cathaoirleach

Mayo County Council



Foreword

I am delighted to introduce the Mayo Migrant Integration Strategy 2022-2026.

I wish to thank all those involved in the development of this important document, and I wish to acknowledge the valuable work already achieved and currently taking place with many of the organisations involved in the creation of this strategy. Thankfully we enjoy a very healthy and positive working relationship with our partner organisations, and we look forward to continuing to build on these positive relationships as this strategy is implemented over the coming 5 years.

The publication of this document is particularly important in the context of changing global migration needs and with the implementation of Ireland's public sector equality and human rights duty.

Mayo County Council is committed to developing Mayo as a County where people from all nationalities and ethnic backgrounds have a sense of belonging, and where all people can contribute to every aspect of life in Mayo.

This strong commitment is stated clearly in our Corporate Plan 2019-2024 and in many aspects of our work such as our involvement in the **Mayo says No to racism** campaign, our in-house Equality Action Team and the many projects delivered through the Mayo Local Community Development Committee.

This is an action focused strategy which sets out how we as a County, intend to meet the identified needs over the next five years.

We in Mayo County Council will continue to co-ordinate the actions necessary to deliver a sustainable, inclusive, prosperous and proud County, which champions equality, human rights, and diversity.

Kevin Kelly

Chief Executive

Mayo County Council



Message from Chair of Mayo Local Community Development Committee

As chairperson of the Mayo Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) I am delighted to see the realisation of this strategy and action plan.

The development of the strategy was well thought out and ensured that the voices of migrants were articulated in this two-way integration process. The voice of staff currently delivering services was also vital to be heard as this strategy is also a plan for organisations delivering public services in Co. Mayo.

Mayo County Council has taken the lead in its approach to the development of this strategy. The Strategy, with its action plan, is ambitious but is also practical with real achievable tasks agreed following an extensive consultation process.

The action plan allocates actions under one of five goals. Each action is assigned a Lead agency and partner agencies to ensure that specific action will be addressed within the lifetime of this strategy.

During the development of this strategy and action plan it was agreed that the strategy should be ambitious but should also be realistic and achievable. I very much welcome this approach and welcome that the strategy states the plan should be a living document to which actions can be added or amended as new evidence emerges and experiences and circumstances change.

Looking forward, I welcome that the strategy commits to identifying annual priority actions based on this initial action plan and that Mayo County Council's Community Section, in partnership with a wider Migrant Integration Forum will take the lead in co-ordinating the development of the plan.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge and recognise the commitment of all those involved in making this strategy document a reality. I wish to acknowledge the migrant public for participating in the consultation process, the work of the members of the interim Mayo Migrant Integration Forum, the Strategy's Steering Group and the staff and management of Mayo County Council for their proactive and enthusiastic approach to this process.

Cllr Neil Cruise

Chair of the Mayo LCDC

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Section 1

Introduction to the Co. Mayo Migrant Integration Strategy

1.1 Introduction

Locally the population of Co. Mayo have become increasingly diverse over the last two decades. According to Census 2016 Co. Mayo is home to 14,086 'non-Irish' nationals. This figure includes 1,242 individuals who did not-state their nationality, when this 'not-stated' group is removed, the proportion of non-Irish nationals in the county is 10.1% (12,844 individuals), this compares with 9.4% for the Western region and a national figure of 11.3% See Table 1.1 for details.

Table 1.1. % of 'non-Irish' nationals in 2002, 2011 & 2016 in Mayo & West Region (Census 2016).

Year	2002		2011		2016	
Level	Total Pop	% 'Non-Irish'	Total Pop	% 'Non-Irish'	Total Pop	% 'Non-Irish' (Excludes individuals who do not state their nationality)
Mayo	117,446	6.3	130,638	10.1	130,507	10.10
West Region	380,297	6.1	445,356	11.6	453,109	9.38
National average	3,917,203	8.5	4,588,252	12.2	4,761,865	11.25

1.2 How the Mayo Integration Strategy was developed

This strategy has been developed using a range of methods including:

- **A review of existing published material** on migrant integration nationally and at a European level.
- A demographic analysis of the **breakdown of the migrant population** in Co. Mayo from the CSO Census 2016 data.
- An **online survey of service providers** which ran for two months. This included 20 in-depth questions on both an online platform and hard copy questionnaires. An invitation to participate in the survey was sent to all relevant agencies and council staff. A total of 67 respondents completed the questionnaire (46.9% frequently worked directly with migrants, while 18.8% worked frequently with asylum seekers).
- **Telephone and online interviews were conducted with key stakeholders** working on migrant integration issues locally.
- An **online survey of individual migrants** in County Mayo was conducted. Invitations to participate in the survey were circulated widely to individual migrants. A total of 100 respondents completed this questionnaire.
- **Five online focus groups** were conducted on Zoom with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. These took place with the support and assistance of the project steering committee during February and March 2021. The focus groups were online because of the COVID-19 restrictions in place at the time. See Table 1.2 for details.

Date	Focus	Number attending
12th Feb	Direct provision residents	
16th Feb	Karen residents	
16th Feb	Russian speaking residents	
17th Feb	Polish speaking residents	
18th Feb	African community	

1.3 What is integration?

1.3.1 Defining integration

Migrant integration has gained prominence on the global agenda with the advent of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda’s call to “leave no one behind”—including migrants¹. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership.² One of these is Goal 10 - “Reduce inequality within and among countries”. Within this are 10 sub-goals, three of which are particularly relevant to this strategy.³

Integration is defined in Irish policy as the “ability to participate to the extent that a person needs and wishes in all of the major components of society without having to relinquish his or her own cultural identity”. (P. 11)⁴ The 2017 Migrant Integration Strategy⁵ vision is that “migrants are facilitated to play a full role in Irish society, that integration is a core principle of Irish life, and that Irish society and institutions work together to promote integration” (p10). (p11. It cuts across different policies and various aspects of migrants’ lives and therefore data on migrant integration cover a wide range of information, including whether migrants are integrating into the economic, social, cultural, and political spheres of society, the discrimination they face, how policies affect migrants’ inclusion, and how the public perceives migrants and immigration.

Concepts closely related to integration include social inclusion and social cohesion. Social inclusion refers to migrants’ inclusion and participation into host communities. Social cohesion refers to concepts such as anti-discrimination, countering xenophobia and promoting mutual understanding (IOM, 2017).⁶

In a recent IOM paper⁷ Integration is defined as the two-way process of **mutual adaptation between migrants and host societies** in which migrants are incorporated into the social, economic, cultural and political life of the receiving community. As such, integration entails a set of **joint responsibilities for migrants and host communities**, and, in this broad understanding, incorporates other related notions such as social inclusion and social cohesion. Integration is a cross-cutting and multi-sectoral issue that pertains to policy areas that address the economic, social, legal, cultural, and civic spheres and impacts all aspects of migrants’ lives and their communities.

¹ <https://migrationdataportal.org/themes/migrant-integration>

² <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>

³ Three relevant goals to this strategy are: 10.2: By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status; 10.3: Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard; 10.7: Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies

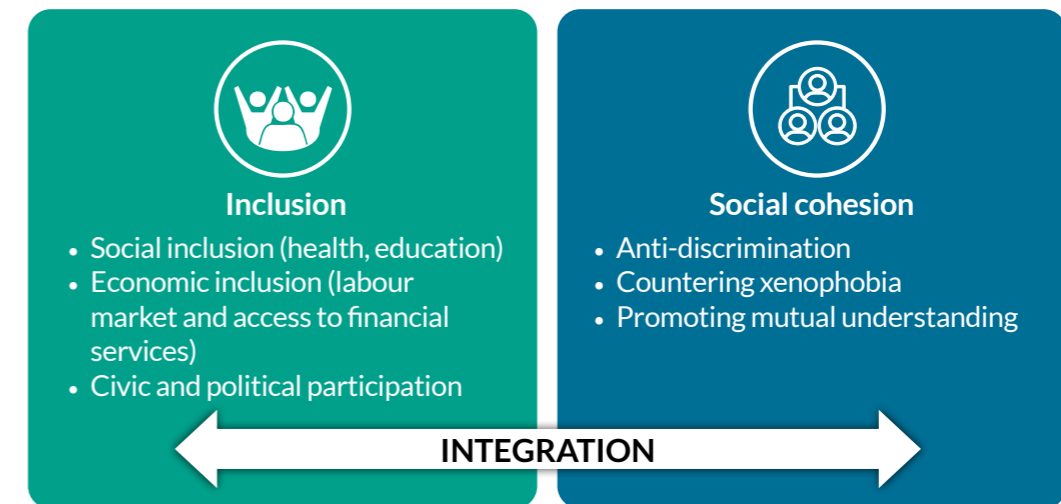
⁴ Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (1999) Integration: a Two Way Process. Dublin. This is in conformity with the EU Common Basic Principles on Integration.

⁵ Department of Justice and Equality (2017) Migrant Integration Strategy – A Blueprint for the Future.

⁶ https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/our_work/ODG/GCM/IOM-Thematic-Paper-Integration-and-Social-Cohesion.pdf

⁷ Integration and Social Cohesion: Key Elements For Reaping The Benefits Of Migration - Global Compact Thematic Paper - Integration and Social Cohesion - 2017 - International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

Figure 1.1 Elements of Integration – IOM⁸



1.3.2 Integration policy at European level

The European Union (EU) identifies⁹ immigration as a permanent feature of European society, recognising that if the flow of immigrants is orderly and well-managed, Member States can reap many benefits. These include stronger economies, greater social cohesion, an increased feeling of security, and cultural diversity. Taken together and across all Member States, these benefits advance the European process and strengthen the Union’s position in the world. Therefore, the effective management of migration by each Member State is in the interest of all. A critical aspect of managing migration is the successful integration of legally residing immigrants and their descendants.

The Justice and Home Affairs Council of November 2004 adopted eleven Common Basic Principles (CBPs) for Immigrant Integration in the EU. These were reaffirmed in 2014 by the European Council. Current Irish integration policy has regard to the EU Common Basic Principles on Integration which provide the framework for the development of policy among EU member states for the promotion of integration of third country nationals. See Table 1.2 for details of the eleven principles.

Current Irish integration policy has regard to the EU Common Basic Principles on Integration which provide the framework for the development of policy among EU member states for the promotion of integration of third country nationals.¹⁰ See Table 1.2 for details of the eleven principles.

⁸ Integration and Social Cohesion: Key Elements for Reaping the Benefits of Migration - International Organisation for Migration (IOM) the UN Migration Agency - Global Compact Thematic Paper - Integration and Social Cohesion

⁹ Council of the European Union November 2014 - Agreeing common basic principles for immigrant integration policy in the European Union

¹⁰ <http://www.temaasyl.se/Documents/EU-dokument/Kommisionsdokument/De%20europeiska%20grundprinciperna%20f%C3%B6r%20integration.pdf>

Table 1.3: The Common Basic Principles (CBPs) for Immigrant Integration in the EU

1. Integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States.
2. Integration implies respect for the basic values of the European Union
3. Employment is a key part of the integration process and is central to the participation of immigrants, to the contribution's immigrants make to the host society, and to making such contributions visible
4. Basic knowledge of the host society's language, history, and institutions is indispensable to integration; enabling immigrants to acquire this basic knowledge is essential to successful integration.
5. Efforts in education are critical to preparing immigrants, and particularly their descendants, to be more successful and more active participants in society.
6. Access for immigrants to institutions, as well as to public and private goods and services, on a basis equal to national citizens and in a non-discriminatory way is a critical foundation for better integration.
7. Frequent interaction between immigrants and Member State citizens is a fundamental mechanism for integration. Shared forums, inter-cultural dialogue, education about immigrants and immigrant cultures, and stimulating living conditions in urban environments enhance the interactions between immigrants and Member State citizens.
8. The practice of diverse cultures and religions is guaranteed under the Charter of Fundamental Rights and must be safeguarded, unless practices conflict with other inviolable European rights or with national law.
9. The participation of immigrants in the democratic process and in the formulation of integration policies and measures, especially at the local level, supports their integration.
10. Mainstreaming integration policies and measures in all relevant policy portfolios and levels of government and public services is an important consideration in public policy formation and implementation.
11. Developing clear goals, indicators and evaluation mechanisms are necessary to adjust policy, evaluate progress on integration and to make the exchange of information more effective.

Source: Council of the European Union - Justice and Home Affairs Council - 2004

In 2010 the Zaragoza Declaration¹¹ on Integration moved the agenda forward by committing Member States to “promote integration as a driver for development and social cohesion by incorporating integration issues in a comprehensive way in all relevant policy fields”. This Declaration also emphasised “the role of local authorities and cities in dealing with intercultural challenges and developing and implementing integration programmes” (as well as “managing diversity and combating racism, xenophobia and all forms of discrimination” (p 6).

In 2014¹² the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) identified three key areas where migrants have clearly contributed to the economies of host countries. See Table 1.3 for details.

¹¹ European Ministerial Conference on Integration (Zaragoza, 15 And 16 April 2010) Declaration.

¹² Is Migration good for the economy - Migration Policy Debates - May 2014 OECD

Table 1.4: Key Areas where Migrants Contribute to the Economy of Host Countries

Labour markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migrants accounted for 47% of the increase in the workforce in the United States and 70% in Europe over the past ten years. • Migrants fill important niches both in fast-growing and declining sectors of the economy. • Like the native-born, young migrants are better educated than those nearing retirement. • Migrants contribute significantly to labour-market flexibility, notably in Europe.
The public purse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migrants contribute more in taxes and social contributions than they receive in benefits. • Labour migrants have the most positive impact on the public purse. • Employment is the single biggest determinant of migrants' net fiscal contribution.
Economic growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migration boosts the working-age population. • Migrants arrive with skills and contribute to human capital development of receiving countries. • Migrants also contribute to technological progress. Understanding these impacts is important if our societies are to usefully debate the role of migration

Source: OECD/EU (2018), *Settling In 2018: Indicators of Immigrant Integration*, OECD Publishing, Paris

The publication concludes that understanding these issues is essential to designing policies that maximise the benefits of migration, especially by improving migrants' employment situation, particularly in the coming decades, as rapid population ageing increases demand for migrants to make up shortfalls in the workforce. 2018 saw the joint OECD-European Commission publication *Indicators on Immigrant Integration*¹³. This document identifies that while many countries have made important improvements in integrating immigrants, many challenges remain and much of the potential that migrants bring with them remains unused, hampering both economic growth and social inclusion. It presents a comprehensive international comparison of the integration outcomes of immigrants and their children across all EU and OECD countries - as well as a number of G20 countries. 74 indicators are used across three strands: labour market and skills; living conditions; and civic engagement and social integration.

1.3.3 Integration policy at national level

The National Migrant Integration Strategy published in February 2017 details the Government's approach to the issue of migrant integration for the period from 2017 to 2020. It envisages a whole-of-Government approach involving actions by all Departments. It is targeted at all migrants, (including refugees), who are legally residing in the State and those who have become naturalised Irish citizens, but who were born outside Ireland.

The National Strategy contains 76 actions under a variety of themes including citizenship and residency, access to public services and social inclusion, education, employment and pathways to work, health, integration in the community, political participation, promoting intercultural awareness and combating racism and xenophobia, volunteering and sport. The 76 actions are being delivered by government departments, local authorities, public bodies, local communities, the business sector, sporting and arts organisations and NGOs.

¹³ OECD/EU (2018), *Settling In 2018: Indicators of Immigrant Integration*, OECD Publishing, Paris/EU, Brussels, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264307216-en>.

Actions applicable to all government departments and agencies include the provision of:

- Information to migrants in language-appropriate formats.
- Ongoing intercultural awareness training for all front-line staff.
- Signage in public offices indicating where interpretation is available; and
- Clear information on how to make a complaint about racist behaviour by staff or another customer

The vision of the National Strategy has the following key elements:

- The basic values of Irish society are respected by all.
- Migrants are enabled and expected to participate in economic life – in employment and self-employment.
- Migrants interact with the host community and participate with them in cultural, sporting and other activities while preserving also their own traditions as they wish.
- Migrants have language skills sufficient to enable them to participate in economic life and in the wider society.
- Migrants have a knowledge of Ireland, its history and culture. Migrants, and particularly their children, benefit fully from the education system.
- Migrants are enabled to celebrate their national, ethnic, cultural and religious identities, subject to the law.
- Migrants participate in politics and public life as provided for by law.
- Integration policies and measures are mainstreamed in the work of all Government Departments and agencies, local authorities and other public bodies and organisations.
- Positive action measures are undertaken where appropriate to address the specific needs of migrant groups.
- Migrants, and migrant representative groups, contribute to policy and service development.
- Migrants get support to access and navigate public services.

National equality legislation

Equality legislation prohibits discrimination on nine grounds: race, gender, civil status, family status, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation and membership of the Traveller community. The race ground encompasses nationality and ethnicity. The legislation is designed to promote equality, prohibit discrimination – direct, indirect and by association – and victimisation, and allow positive measures to ensure full equality across the nine grounds.

The Employment Equality Acts 1998– 2015 outlaw discrimination at work including recruitment and promotion; equal pay; working conditions; training or experience; dismissal and harassment including sexual harassment. The EEA aim to ensure that people have equal opportunities in relation to skills, training, jobs and promotion. The EEA explain the different kinds of discrimination in relation to the workplace which are against the law e.g., Direct discrimination; indirect discrimination; discrimination by association; discrimination by imputation. It also bans harassment (Unwanted, hostile behaviour because of who you are) and sexual harassment (unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature). Victimisation, which is when an employer dismisses someone or treats them badly because they have made a complaint related to equality law is also illegal. Other forms of discrimination are not against the law.

The Equal Status Acts 2000–2015 (ESAs) outlaw discrimination outside the workplace, in particular in the provision of goods and services, disposal of property and certain aspects of education. The ESAs aim to make sure that people are treated equally when they access goods and services. Discrimination in relation to the provision of goods and services happens when someone is treated less favourably than another person, because of who they are. There are different kinds of discrimination. They all involve comparison with how other people are treated. The ESA protects nine categories of people¹⁴ generally, and ten groups of people¹⁵ in relation to accommodation. Not all differences of treatment are seen as discrimination under the ESA.

¹⁴ Gender ground, civil status ground, family status ground, age ground, race ground, religion ground, disability ground, sexual orientation ground and membership of the Traveller community ground

¹⁵ Gender ground, civil status ground, family status ground, age ground, race ground, religion ground, disability ground, sexual orientation ground and membership of the Traveller community ground and housing assistance ground

Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014

Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 imposes a statutory obligation on public bodies in performing their functions to have regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination.
- promote equality of opportunity and treatment for staff and persons to whom it provides services.
- protect the human rights of staff and services users.

Since 2014, the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty is part of the legislative framework governing human rights and equality in Ireland. The 2014 Act requires a public body, having regard to its functions, purpose, size and resources available to it, to: 1. Assess - an assessment of the human rights and equality issues it believes to be relevant to the functions and purpose of the body; 2. Address - set out the policies, plans and actions in place or proposed to be put in place to address those issues; 3. Report - report on developments and achievements in its annual report.

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) was established in 2014 as an independent statutory body that accounts directly to the Oireachtas. Its purpose is to promote and protect human rights and equality in Ireland and build a culture of respect for human rights, equality and intercultural understanding in the State. A significant innovation in the Act that established the Irish Commission was Act 2014 is the introduction of a positive duty on public bodies to have due regard to human rights and equality in their work and to conduct their business in a manner that is consistent with individual human rights. This means the systematic integration of an equality and human right perspective into the everyday work of all public bodies, requiring them to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of their employees, customers, service users and everyone affected by their policies and plans. This legal obligation is called the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

A National Action Plan Against Racism for Ireland

Work began in 2020 on the development of this plan. The planning process is being led by an Anti-Racism Committee established by the Dept of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. The Committee published an interim report¹⁶ to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth in November 2020. This committee also undertook a process of public consultations over the period April to July 2021. The next stage of the process will include the publication of a draft strategy.

1.3.4 Integration policy at county level

Mayo Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) a committee of Mayo County Council established in 2014 has responsibility for the development and implementation of a six year Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for Co. Mayo. The committee is made up of representatives from the County Council and local development companies, public bodies and representatives of social, economic, environmental and community interests. The LCDC is a sub-committee of the Mayo County Council but is independent in the discharge of its functions.

The LCDC 19-member committee is made up of nine Statutory Members and ten Non-Statutory Members. The LCDC Plan (2015-2021) contains a number of specific actions relevant to migrant integration. See Table 1.4 for details.

¹⁶ Anti-Racism Committee (2020) Interim Report to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

Table 1.5: Mayo Local Economic and Community Plan Actions relevant to Migrant Integration		
Goal No. and Aim	Objective/s	Outcomes Required
Goal 1 Develop initiatives that support social inclusion amongst groups that are vulnerable to poverty and exclusion	Objective 1.1 To support the resettlement of UNHCR Programme Refugees in Co. Mayo.	Integration of 20 Syrian families in Castlebar, Westport and Claremorris Improved language skills Improved quality of life for families Appointment of resettlement integration worker Access to support
	Objective 1.2 To develop the capacity of asylum seekers living in Direct Provision in Ballyhaunis, through Goal 1 of the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (2015-2017) by: Outreach and advocacy support and training including courses for those moving out of Direct Provision	Participants have a better understanding of public structures and support systems Confidence building Participation in local structures
Goal 2 Empower and build capacity in communities and support participation in community development initiatives	Objective 5.1 'To further develop and support the Public Participation Network in Mayo by: – Support for the Secretariat – Develop & support linkage groups – Sharing and disseminating information to community groups – Facilitating community participation in policy making – Provide info/training to reps – Ensure PPN reaches out to socially excluded groups'	Greater civic engagement Increase in membership Development of policy and wellbeing statements

Source: Mayo LECP (2015-2021)

1.3.5 Integration initiatives at a county level

This section contains some examples of integration developments within Co. Mayo.

Mayo Intercultural Action (MIA)

Mayo Intercultural Action (MIA) is a project of South West Mayo Development Company. They provide support, information and advocacy to migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and their families living in County Mayo. MIA aim to promote the meaningful participation of migrants and their families in all aspects of the community in the county. They work creatively to promote integration and cross-cultural exchange, delivering a range of projects and initiatives directly and in partnership with other organisations.

Mayo Refugee Resettlement Programme

In 1998 the Irish Government commenced participation in the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) Refugee Resettlement Programme and agreed to annually admit up to ten persons who were categorised by UNHCR as vulnerable together with members of their families. In practice, this transpired to admitting approximately 40 persons per year. In 2005 the Government increased the quota from 40 to 200 persons per annum. Resettlement refugees have the same rights and privileges as convention refugees. Resettlement is an instrument of protection normally employed by the UNHCR where refugee's safety, health or fundamental human rights are at risk in the country where they initially sought refuge. The decision to resettle refugees is taken only when other options such as voluntary repatriation and local integration are not an option.

In 2016 Mayo County Council established an Interagency Resettlement Committee to coordinate and oversee the resettlement programme in Mayo. The Committee is made up of senior representatives from various services including education, health, housing, Gardaí, social protection, childcare, community and local development. The families arrive in Ireland often with limited English and very few material possessions; many dealing with the fall-out from the conflict in their home countries. Some families have spent years in refugee camps with limited access to basic medical and education services. With funding from the Department of Justice and EU AMIF programmes Mayo County Council appointed Resettlement Workers through Southwest Mayo Development Company to provide practical support to the families resettled through this programme and assist them to live independently. The resettlement team works from the Mayo Intercultural Action Offices in Castlebar.

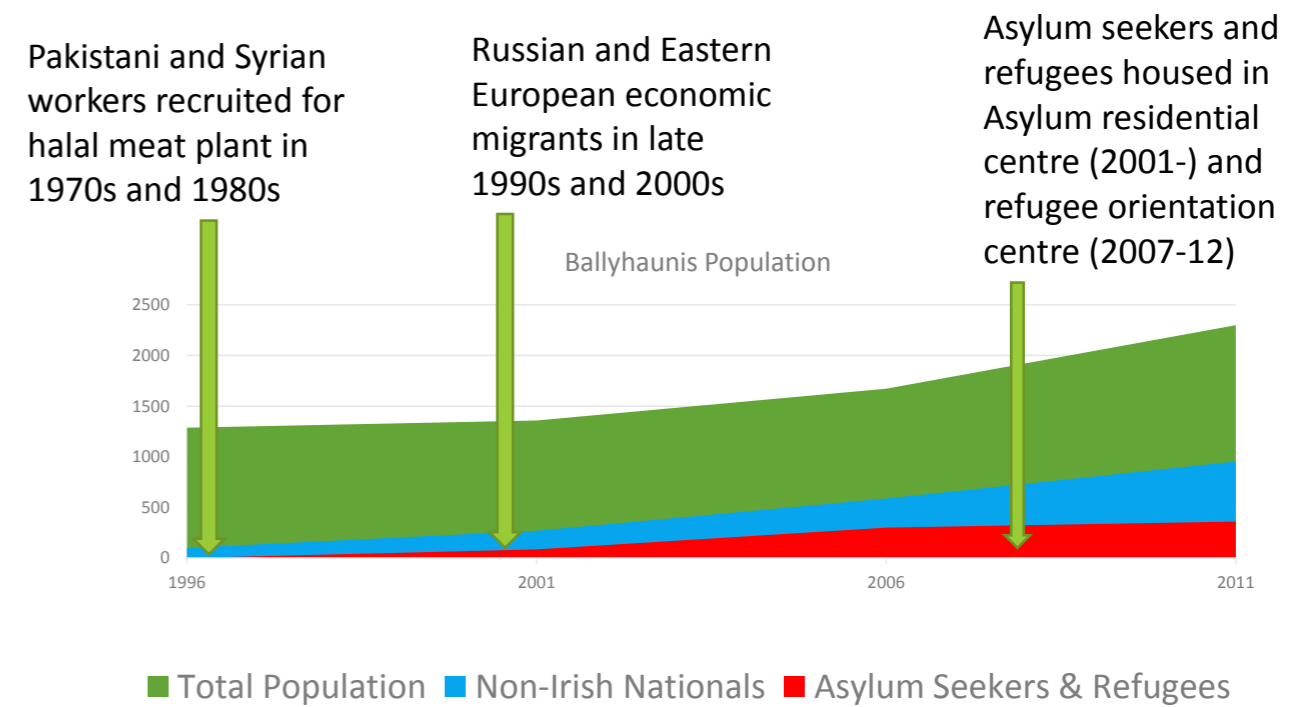
Resettlement of members of the Karen Community (from Burma / Myanmar) in Co Mayo

The Karen people originated from Tibet and China and settled the eastern mountainous region of Burma about two thousand years ago. In the 8th and 9th centuries, the Burmese began migrating to the area north of what is now the Karen state. Burma achieved independence from the British in 1948, but the Karen people were not granted rights to their own land. During the 1960s, the Burmese army began a campaign against the Karen called 'Four Cuts' which forced entire Karen communities to relocate and be cut off from all resources. The military regime established in 1962 has continued to oppress the Karen and other ethnic groups in Burma today. This results in many Karen fleeing across the border to refugee camps in neighbouring Thailand. Life in the refugee camps is difficult and uncertain. In 2007 18 Karen families were placed on the Irish Government UN Refugee Resettlement Programme. Initially 10 families arrived in Ballyhaunis for an induction programme, before moving to their new lives in Castlebar. Eight more families followed later and were resettled in Ballina.

Ballyhaunis the most diverse town in Ireland



Figure 1.2 Changes in the population of Ballyhaunis from 1996 to 2011 (Census 1996, 2002, 2006, 2011).



Ballyhaunis population 1996-2011

The mixture of migrant workers, asylum seekers and refugees arriving from all parts of the world has made Ballyhaunis one of Ireland’s most diverse and cosmopolitan town. Townspeople are proud of the cordial relations between the different groups: there have been few instances of racial tensions, hate crimes or anti-immigrant sentiments. The town’s cultural diversity was recognized in the Ballyhaunis Gathering in 2013, an event held as part of a nationwide celebration of Irish heritage. In Ballyhaunis, the centrepiece was a procession to a local holy well, featuring 42 flags for the town’s cultural groups, which stopped on the way at the Mosque for a reading from the Quran.

At the beginning of the 1970s, the population of Ballyhaunis, which was a typical market town, was just under 1,100 people, who were predominantly white, Irish-born and Catholic. Since then, Ballyhaunis has been transformed into one of the most diverse towns in Ireland, with over 40 different nationalities and half of residents born outside Ireland. The change had been incremental, with three main movements of immigrants: specialist labour migrants from Pakistan and Syria in the 1970s and 1980s (to work in the halal meat factories), migrant workers from eastern Europe in the 1990s and 2000s (to fill labour shortages in the Celtic Tiger era, with employment in food processing, construction, manufacturing and care services), and asylum seekers and refugees in the 2000s and 2010s (with the opening in 2001 of a direct provision centre in the town as part of the Irish government’s policy of dispersing asylum seekers around the country). The Centre originally provided accommodation for 85 residents from 15 countries, but with time expanded to around 300 residents at any time, drawn from many countries in Africa, Asia, the Balkans and the Middle East, reflecting geopolitical trends. In 2007 Ireland’s National Refugee Orientation Centre was established in Ballyhaunis to house groups of refugees accepted under United Nations’ programmes for six weeks of orientation before being dispersed elsewhere in the country. Figure 1.2 illustrates the impacts on these different movements on the population of the town.

Section 2

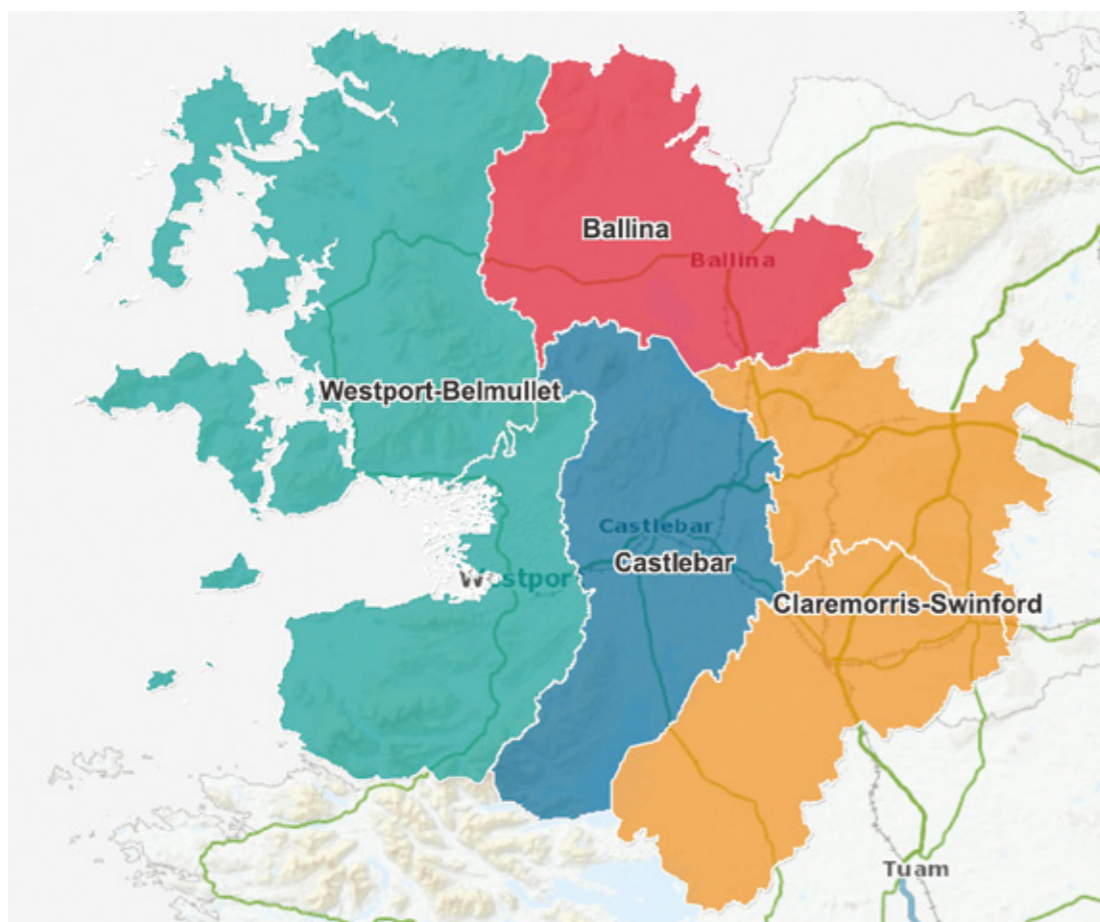
Socio-Economic Diversity Data in Co. Mayo

2.1 Diversity in Co. Mayo

Co. Mayo has a total population of 130,507 (Census 2016), representing 2.7% of the population of the state. Its population has grown by 5.4% over the period 2006 to 2016, significantly less than the State rate of 12.3%. Much of the growth in the population of the county over the period 2006 to 2016 can be attributed to migrants arriving in the county. Approximately 70.7% of the Mayo population live in rural communities while 29.3% are defined as living in urban areas.

Between 1991 and 2016 the population of the county grew by approximately 18% compared to 35% for the State as a whole. The county is divided into 4 Municipal Districts (MDs). See Figure 2.1 for details.

Figure 2.1: A Map of the Municipal Districts (MD) in Co. Mayo



Claremorris MD recorded the largest growth in the population within the county over the period 2002 to 2016 recording an increase of 15.2%. Castlebar MD was second with 10.4% increase, Ballina MD third with 7.5% and finally West Mayo MD with 6.7% growth during that same period.

2.2 Birthplace¹⁷

The population of County Mayo in 2016 included 21,782 people (17.0% of pop) who have been born outside of Ireland compared with a state figure of 17.28%. In 2011 17.25% percentage of the population of Co Mayo was born outside of Ireland, while the percentage for the state in 2011 was 16.94%. See Table 2.1 for details.

Table 2.1: Country of Origin in Co. Mayo (Census, 2016)

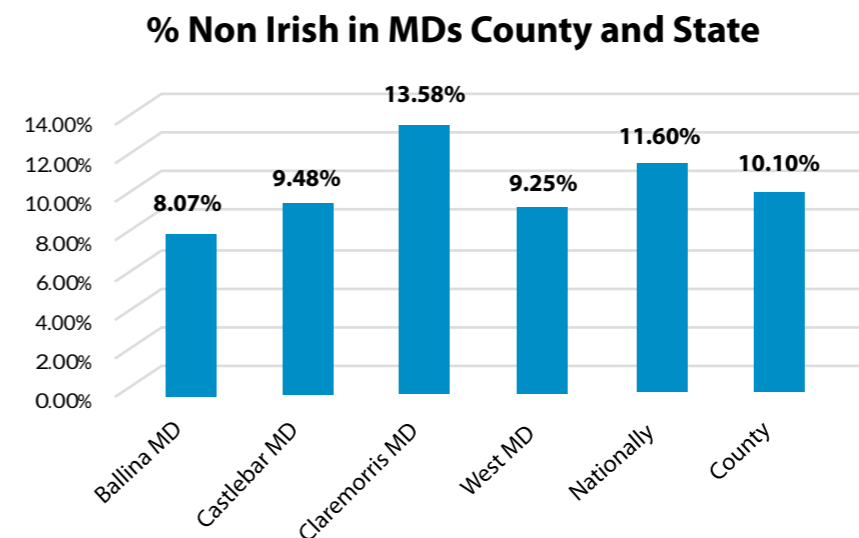
Country	Municipal Ballina		Municipal Castlebar		Municipal Claremorris		Municipal West		County Mayo		State	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Ireland	27,598	85.44%	28,075	83.13%	25,989	80.58%	24,950	82.98%	106,612	83.04%	3,879,515	82.72%
UK	3,049	9.44%	3,068	9.08%	2,806	8.70%	3,401	11.31%	12,324	9.60%	277,206	5.91%
Poland	652	2.02%	755	2.24%	741	2.30%	469	1.56%	2,617	2.04%	115,161	2.46%
Lithuania	31	0.10%	196	0.58%	605	1.88%	47	0.16%	879	0.68%	33,344	0.71%
Other EU 27	306	0.95%	538	1.59%	856	2.75%	549	1.83%	2,279	1.78%	145,282	3.10%
Rest of the World	665	2.06%	1,141	3.38%	1,226	3.80%	651	2.17%	3,683	2.87%	239,413	5.10%
Total	32,301	100.00%	33,773	100.00%	32,253	100.00%	30,067	100.00%	128,394	100.00%	4,689,921	100.00%

Castlebar MD has more people born outside of Ireland than the other three MDs in the county. 29.2% of the population in Castlebar MD was born outside of Ireland which is significantly higher than the national average (17.3%). Ballina MD has the lowest proportion of those born outside of Ireland (14.6%). Rest of the world (outside EU) born individuals account for the highest proportion of people outside of Ireland and the UK who live in Co. Mayo (3.8%). This compares to the national average of 5%. Polish people (2%) are the largest single national group outside of Ireland and UK. Co. Mayo has a slightly lower proportion (1.9%) of those in other European Union countries than the national average (3.1%) and a much greater rate of people born in the UK (9.6%).

2.3 Nationality

According to the 2016 census, there were a total of 14,086 non- Irish nationals in Co. Mayo. This figure includes 1,242 individuals who did not state their nationality. When this group of ‘non-stated’ is excluded, non- Irish nationals make up 10.1% (12,844 individuals). Co. Mayo has the 20th highest level of non- Irish nationals compared with the 31 local authority areas. Some parts of the county have higher levels of non-Irish nationals than other parts of the county. See Figure 2.2 for details of the percentage of non-Irish Nationals across the four MD’s.

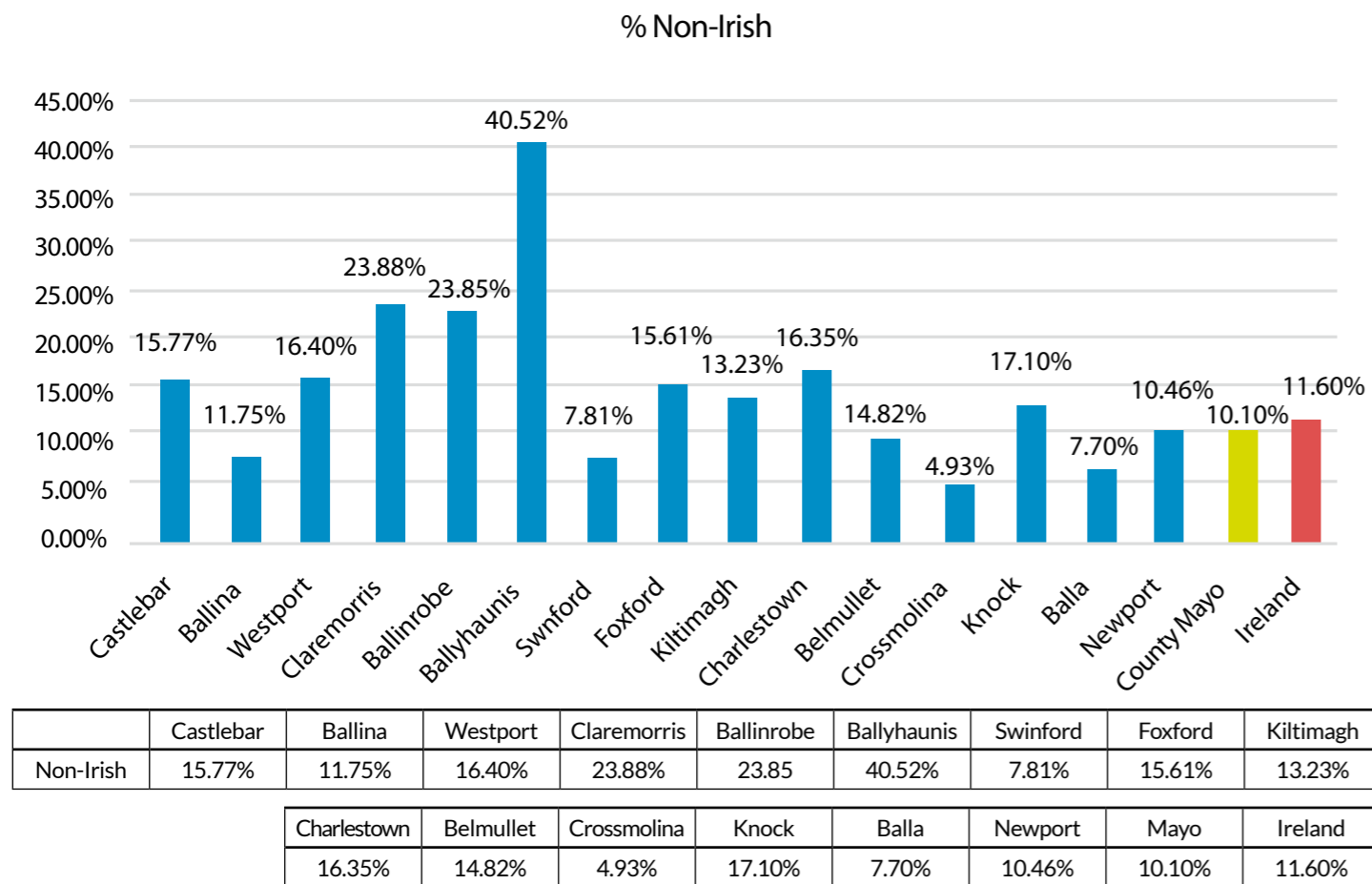
Figure 2.2: Percentage of Non-Irish Nationals across MDs in Co. Mayo (n=12,844)



¹⁷ Birthplace is defined as where an individual is born. It is not necessarily a reflection of nationality. Birthplace figures (Table 2.1) will therefore often differ from nationality figures (Table 1.1)

Fig 2.3 illustrates the percentage of non-Irish nationals who are resident in the main settlements of Co. Mayo.

Figure 2.3: Percentage of Non-Irish Nationals in Town and Village Settlements in Co. Mayo (n=12,844)



Ballyhaunis town has the highest percentage of non-Irish nationals with 40.5%. Claremorris has the 2nd highest proportion of non-Irish nationals in Mayo (23.9%) closely followed by Ballinrobe with 23.9%. This is substantially higher than the county figure of 10.1% and the national figure of 11.6%. In general, the highest concentration of non-Irish nationals is in the towns of the county and in the small-town urban areas like Ballyhaunis and Claremorris. It is also the case that within towns, there can be concentrations of particular nationalities. See Table 2.2 for details of locations where non-Irish nationals make up more than 34% of the population.

Table 2.2: Small Areas (SAs) in Co Mayo which have > 34% of their population with a nationality other than Irish or UK.

Community	Neighbourhood	Percent
Ballyhaunis	Abbeyquarter	65.41%
Westport Urban	Leeson Enterprise Centre area of Altamont St.	55.37%
Ballyhaunis	Clare Road	50.24%
Ballyhaunis	The Maples	48.93%
Claremorris	Chapel Lane / Town Hall Road	48.04%
Claremorris	Grattan Ave. / Manor & Claremount	45.06%
Ballyhaunis	Hazelhill downs / court & Upper Main street	41.38%
Ballinrobe	Main Street / Bower's Lane	41.18%
Ballinrobe	Church Lane / New Street	40.88%

Ballinrobe	Cill O'Seighin	40.13%
Ballinrobe	The Common / Corr na Gcloch	36.16%
Westport Urban	Grove Park / Mill Street	35.59%
Westport Urban	Mill Road / Distillery Court / Altamont St.	34.29%
Castlebar Urban	Pavillion Road / The Orchard / Spencer Manor	34.17%
Westport Urban	Cois Abhainn / Ashwood Meadows	33.54%
Castlebar Urban	Hopkins Road	31.43%
Claremorris	Elm Park	31.32%
Ballinrobe	Abbey Road / Waterside Abbey	30.77%
Ballyhaunis	Hazelhill	28.57%
Claremorris	D'Alton Street / Mount Street. The Lawn	28.30%

Table 2.3 Provides a breakdown of the ten most frequently occurring nationalities found in the county.

Table 2.3: Ten most frequently occurring non-Irish nationalities in Co Mayo¹⁸

Nationality	Population 2011	Population 2016	Change 2011 - 2016	% Change 2011 - 2016	Asa % of Non-Irish Nationals 2016
UK	5,805	5,161	644	-11.09%	33.66%
Polish	2,934	2,802	132	-4.50%	18.28%
Lithuanian	862	975	113	13.11%	6.36%
Irish-UK	693	732	39	5.63%	4.77%
Irish-American	665	646	19	-2.86%	4.21%
Latvian	488	526	38	7.79%	3.43%
American (US)	340	286	54	-15.88%	1.87%
German	278	269	9	-3.24%	1.75%
Slovak	254	261	7	2.76%	1.70%
Pakistani	277	204	73	-26.35%	1.33%

2.4 Ethnic and Cultural Background

Within the 2016 Census respondent were able to identify by ethnic or cultural background. See Table 2.4 for details.

Table 2.4: Usually resident population in Co Mayo by ethnic or cultural background

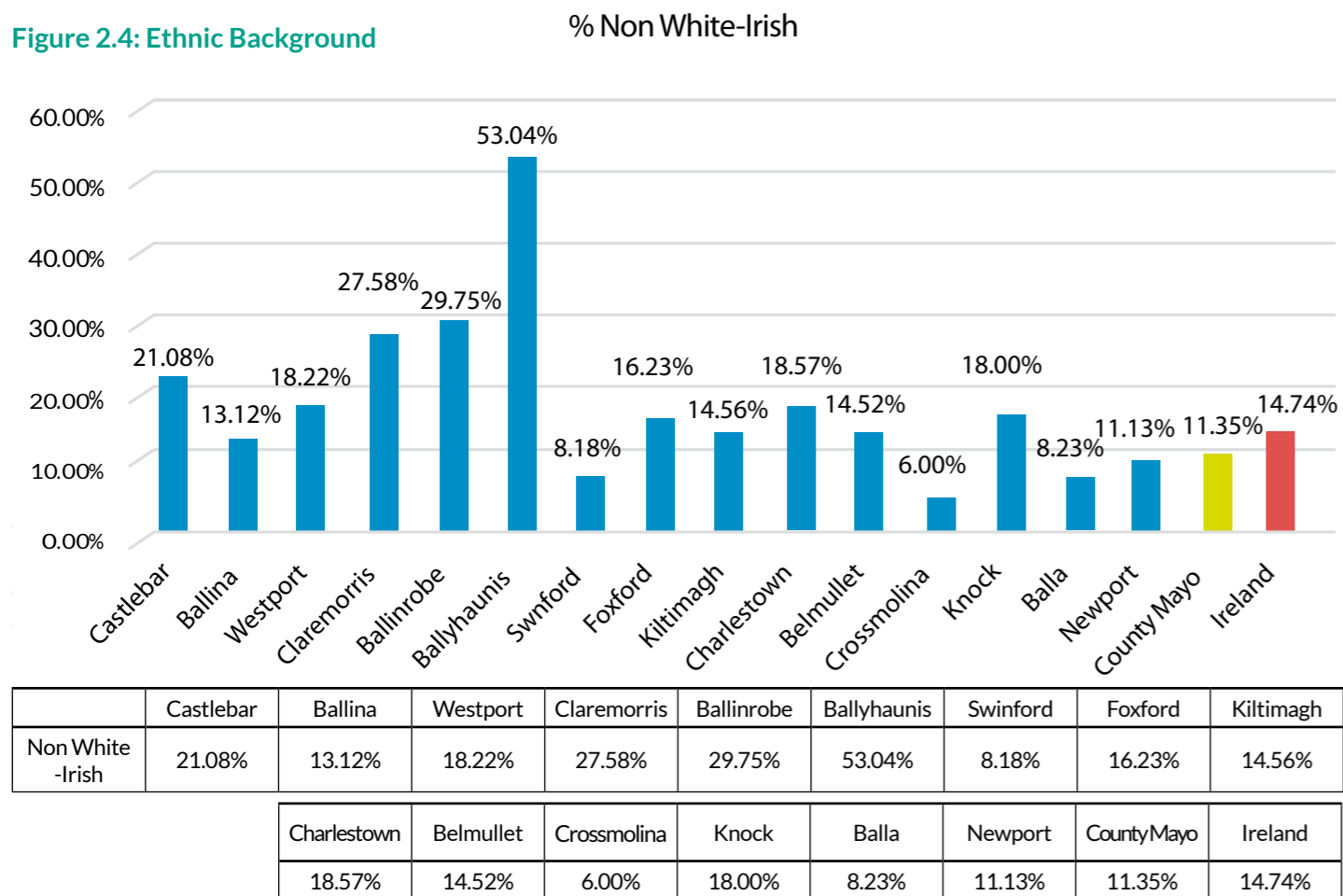
Ethnic or cultural background	Persons	% of county population	% of county population
White Irish	110,804	86.30	87.31
White Irish Traveller	1,299	1.01	
Other White	11,164	8.70	11.24
Black or Black Irish	589	0.46	
Asian or Asian Irish	1,420	1.11	
Other	1,259	0.98	
Not stated	1,859	1.45	1.45
Total	128,394		

¹⁸ This table only includes the 10 most frequently occurring nationalities in Co. Mayo. Other less frequently occurring nationalities which make up approx. 20% of the migrant population are not included.

Co. Mayo records 'white Irish' levels (87.3%) marginally greater than the state (82.2%), it also has 1.0% of the population made up of White Irish Travellers. Across the Municipal Districts there is significant variation in 'white Irish' levels with Ballina MD (90.3%); Castlebar MD (87.0%); Claremorris MD (83.0%) and West Mayo MD (89.1%). There is also significant variation visible between different towns and villages within the county.

There are 14,432 'non-white Irish' individuals in County Mayo (11.4% of the normally resident population less "Not Stated"). See Figure 2.4 for details.

Figure 2.4: Ethnic Background



	Castlebar	Ballina	Westport	Claremorris	Ballinrobe	Ballyhaunis	Swinford	Foxford	Kiltimagh
Non White-Irish	21.08%	13.12%	18.22%	27.58%	29.75%	53.04%	8.18%	16.23%	14.56%
	Charlestown	Belmullet	Crossmolina	Knock	Balla	Newport	County Mayo	Ireland	
	18.57%	14.52%	6.00%	18.00%	8.23%	11.13%	11.35%	14.74%	

2.5 Ability to speak English

See Table 2.5 for details of the percentage of Co. Mayo residents who do not have English as a first language, related to their ability to speak English.

Table 2.5: Co. Mayo MD Analysis of Individuals who do not have English as their first language by their self-rated ability to speak English

Ability to speak English	Ballina MD		Castlebar MD		Claremorris MD		West MD		County Mayo		Nationally	
	Percent	Persons	Percent	Persons	Percent	Persons	Percent	Persons	Percent	Persons	Percent	Persons
Very well	1,036	50.07%	1,613	52.63%	1,731	42.01%	1,041	52.44%	5,421	48.23%	328,912	53.74%
Well	619	29.92%	912	29.76%	1,356	31.91%	586	29.52%	3,473	30.90%	179,104	29.26%
Not well	305	14.74%	376	12.27%	773	18.76%	257	12.95%	1,711	15.22%	72,713	11.88%
Not at all	51	2.46%	74	2.41%	149	3.62%	36	1.81%	310	2.76%	13,895	2.27%
Not stated	58	2.80%	90	2.94%	111	2.69%	65	3.27%	324	2.88%	17,394	2.84%
Total	2,069	100.00%	3,065	100.00%	4,120	100.00%	1,985	100.00%	11,239	100.00%	612,018	100.00%

Analysis of Table 2.5 indicates that Co. Mayo scores mildly relatively poorly on the ability to speak English of those with foreign languages as a first language. 48.23% of this population can speak English very well, compared with 53.74% nationally. Claremorris MD, which has the highest proportions of non-Irish nationals, has the lowest proportion of those who can speak English Very Well (42.01%). This combined score of (74.92%) significantly lags behind the national average of 83% and Castlebar MD (82.39%) and West Mayo MD (81.96%). 3.62% of those with a foreign language in Claremorris MD cannot speak English at all.

See Table 2.6 for details of the most popular first languages of migrants who do not have English as a first language

Table 2.6: Most popular first languages of migrants who do not have English as a first language

MD	Polish	French	Lithuanian	Other	Total
Ballina MD	785	294	30	960	2,069
Castlebar MD	928	313	220	1,604	3,065
Claremorris MD	879	297	643	2,301	4,120
West Mayo MD	563	395	39	988	1,985
	3,155 (28%)	1,299 (12%)	932 (8%)	5,853 (52%)	11,239

Polish is clearly the most spoken foreign language followed by French and Lithuanian. However, a host of other languages is over half of those who do not have English as a first language.

2.6 Religion

"Non-Irish" nationals like Irish nationals have a range of diverse religious beliefs and indeed no religious beliefs. See Table 2.8 for a breakdown of the religions of Irish nationals and 'non-Irish' nationals over the period 2011-2016. See Table 2.8 for details of the changes in religions over the period 2011 and 2016.

Table 2.7 Numbers of Persons resident in Co. Mayo in 2011 and 2016 by religion & nationality

Religion	All Nationalities		Irish		Non Irish		Not Stated	
	2011	2016	2011	2016	2011	2016	2011	2016
All Religions	130,638	130,507	113,751	114,308	13,778	12,844	1,219	1,242
Roman Catholic	117,721	113,481	107,567	104,606	8,300	7,234	722	566
Church of Ireland, England, Anglican, Episcopalian	2,595	2,631	1,301	1,375	1,114	1,041	24	21
Muslim (Islamic)	1,039	1,265	427	742	584	487	13	17
Orthodox (Greek, Coptic, Russian)	516	633	77	167	406	445	11	5
Christian (Not Specified)	692	674	408	406	240	222	5	9
Presbyterian	331	347	128	134	152	132	4	-
Hindu	69	103	13	53	54	49	-	1
Apostolic or Penecostal	177	153	75	83	98	67	3	1
Other stated Religion (nec)	1,267	1,822	480	984	693	659	11	9
No religion	4,994	7,604	2,690	4,966	1,952	2,243	38	35
Notstated	1,237	1,794	585	792	185	265	388	578

Analysis of Table 2.8 shows that the number of individuals within the county with no religion is growing, while the number of Roman Catholics in the county is falling. There has been a small increase in the number of Church of Ireland, Hindu, Presbyterian, Apostolic or Pentecostal and Orthodox religions in the county. There has been a 21.8% increase in the numbers of Muslims in Mayo. Table 2.9 provides a breakdown of religion across the four Mayo MDs, while Table 2.10 provides an analysis of the changes in religion over the period 2006-2016 across the county and the state by Irish and non-Irish nationality

Table 2.8 Religion across the four Mayo MDs' in 2016

MD	Catholic	%	Other Religion	%	No Religion	%	Not stated	%	Total
Ballina	29,131	89.1%	1,671	5.1%	1,481	4.5%	405	1.3%	32,688
Castlebar	29,555	86.5%	2,057	6.0%	2,054	6.0%	503	1.5%	34,169
Claremorris	28,031	85.8%	2,339	7.2%	1,835	5.6%	467	1.4%	32,672
West Mayo	26,764	86.4%	1,561	5.0%	2,234	7.2%	419	1.4%	30,978
Nationally	3,729,115	78.31%	439,055	9.22%	468,421	9.84%	125,274	2.63%	4,761,865

N.B. Table 2.9 is a rate of change percentage and not proportion e.g. the Orthodox numbers increased from 250 to 516 from 2006 to 2011, a 106.4% increase.

Table 2.9 Analysis of the Percentage Changes in Total Persons resident in Mayo from 2006-2016 by Religion

Religion	Mayo		State Total		State Irish		State Non Irish	
	2011	2016	2011	2016	2011	2016	2011	2016
All religions	5.49%	-0.10%	6.31%	3.51%	5.61%	3.81%	22.89%	-1.66%
Roman Catholic	3.07%	-3.60%	3.91%	-3.64%	3.30%	-3.09%	24.54%	-10.35%
Church of Ireland (incl. Protestant)	4.81%	1.39%	-0.92%	-1.49%	6.52%	2.68%	-2.41%	-16.29%
Muslim (Islamic)	41.75%	21.75%	32.39%	22.41%	46.44%	46.36%	25.84%	-7.41%
Other Christian religion, n.e.s.	69.19%	-2.60%	26.34%	-10.16%	32.04%	3.23%	24.73%	-41.03%
Presbyterian	18.21%	4.83%	-3.11%	-2.92%	5.02%	4.49%	6.86%	-18.29%
Orthodox (Greek, Coptic, Russian)	106.40%	22.67%	52.74%	27.60%	65.97%	56.83%	51.67%	13.90%
Other stated religions (1)	43.14%	37.34%	21.72%	24.37%	31.73%	44.78%	24.13%	-9.13%
No religion	52.86%	52.26%	27.45%	43.17%	39.16%	50.10%	16.73%	19.92%
Not stated	7.38%	45.03%	-2.41%	42.46%	-16.38%	44.15%	5.09%	37.10%

Analysis of Table 2.9 indicates that an increasing percentage of the population (Irish nationals and Non-Irish nationals) across the state are moving away from specific faiths and towards no religion or are preferring not to state their religion.

2.7 Migration flows into Ireland

The number of immigrants (arriving in the state) in the year to April 2019 is estimated to have decreased by 1.9% from 90,300 to 88,600 (after increasing by 6.7% from 84,600 to 90,300 during 2017-2018). In April 2019, 53,000 (66.9%) of immigrants aged 15+ had a 3rd level qualification.

The number of emigrants (leaving the state) also declined in the year to April 2019, from 56,300 to 54,900 (-1.4%). These combined changes have resulted in net inward migration for Ireland in 2019 of 33,700, similar to the figure in 2018 of 34,000, which was the highest level of net inward migration since 2008.

In 2018 Irish nationals experienced net inward migration for the first time since 2009, rising to +100 in 2018 from -3,400 the previous year. This increased to 2,100 in 2019. Net inward migration among non-Irish nationals remained strong, increasing from 23,200 in 2017 to 33,900 in 2018 to 35,800 in 2019. The number of births in the period of 2019 was 61,200 while the number of deaths was 30,400, resulting in a natural increase of the population of 30,800.

The combined effect of natural increase and positive net migration resulted in an overall increase in the population of 64,500 bringing the population estimate to 4.92 million in April 2019. Non-Irish nationals from outside the EU continued to display strong migration flows, accounting for 30,600 (34.5%) of total immigrants and 11,200 (20.4%) of total emigrants.

2.8 Numbers in Direct Provision

The number of asylum seekers in direct provision in Co. Mayo fluctuates on an ongoing basis. The county has one dedicated direct provision accommodation centre, the Ballyhaunis Provision Centre in Ballyhaunis town. The county also has a number of emergency Direct Provision accommodation centres (the majority of which are in the south of the county).



Section 3

Consultations: Migration in Co. Mayo

3.1 Issues identified in the consultation process

The main issues that emerged from the consultation process are identified in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Issues arising from the consultations	
1. Language, Training and Enhancing Communication Skills	2. Improving Access to Healthcare, Transport and other Services
<p>Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language classes and volunteer tutors, social opportunities in communities to help people learn to communicate. Identify gaps in English language provision across the council. Make English skills acquisition easier to navigate and encourage gaps in provision to be filled. 2 Hours of learning English a week not enough Learn English while embedded in work and other local community-based organisations. Support different types and levels of English language skills provision <p>Interpreters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More Interpreters for language problems accessing work Interpreter for new families. To establish a National Interpretation Centre similar to the Australian Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) 	<p>Healthcare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthcare can be difficult to access -e.g., improve transport Improving weekend healthcare which is currently difficult to access Improving access to GP. Many GPs are not taking on extra patients Improve access to mental health services for people with Trauma, PTSD e.g., out of war-torn countries. Also, consequential mental health issues from lack of work, routine, social connections etc. while resident in Mayo. <p>Transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport to key facilities on a regular basis Transport to the bigger towns more frequently. Mayo is a large county. <p>Training for service providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver training for front line staff on diversity, inclusion and integration and the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty in order to enhance the intercultural competencies of staff <p>Local authority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify an Integration champion in each Council. Establish an Integration Co-ordinator role Develop a capacity building project for new migrants Increase the visibility of the PPNs with migrant communities. Encourage more migrant groups to join the PPNs Encourage the representation of migrant communities on local council and other structures <p>Domestic violence services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist migrants living in circumstances of domestic violence and coercive control. <p>Asylum process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speed up applications for asylum.

<p>Access to communication and technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More Public Computers and greater Information Communication Technology availability Induction pack for new migrants <p>Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removes major barriers for accessing work, earning income, interviews, CV preparation etc. Time to learn appropriately to access employment More awareness on Laws and Customs of Ireland, as some migrants from other EU countries assume their laws are compatible with ours, when there are differences. 	<p>Enhance access to services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve communication of available services and appropriate information Information point (similar to Citizens Information) but specifically for migrants Access to all information in specific language of migrant Develop an information pack for migrants on life in County Mayo and Ireland Online services are limited, so requirement for more assistance offline. Have advocates to represent migrants of a broad range of issues Appropriate and specific training of staff to meet the needs of Migrants. More support in providing jobs and social benefits to single parents. Develop bespoke services for specific cultural / national groups of migrants. (Census data and table from service providers survey on underserved groups of Migrants.) Address the issue of migrants believing that they are registered for services by being registered for voting. Support for families who are here on short term basis. Simplify the rules and means of engagement with services to negate exclusion Have weekend opening hours for services suitable for working migrants Additional financial supports Better Social Welfare and Benefits Assistance on Medical Expenses
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Table 3.1 Issues arising from the consultations

3. Enhancing Education and Training Opportunities	4. Encouraging and Remove Barriers Employment, Business Development and Pathways to Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist migrants to explore quality work placements designation and what this means for migrants • Assist migrants navigate local education and training options available to them • Identify community transport options and solutions for migrants accessing education and training • Host an annual Intercultural Day in County Mayo • Personalised mentor-like supports to upskill • Support for asylum seekers' children to access Third Level Grants. • Educate those migrants who may have deficits of knowledge on how to use particular services in Mayo. • Assist and empower migrants on using online platforms like Zoom. • Local Schools are welcoming to migrants (Latvians and Russian Speakers) • Online Latvian Leaving Cert classes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove discrimination in the workplace • Encourage the development of migrant led entrepreneurial and social entrepreneurial businesses • Discuss how to build a bank of business mentors to support emerging migrant entrepreneurs / social entrepreneurs and to offer some internships • Improve access to job / work or volunteer if not allow to pay • Work with all existing CE schemes to assist them to become more integration focused • Employment improves morale, self-worth and self-esteem • Remove barriers from accessing employment • More migrants in Public Sector jobs • Preparation for employment – language / CV preparation / accessing suitable job vacancies / preparing for interview / rights & entitlements & employment law and norms etc. / tailored employment supports • Encourage new migrant entrepreneurs to join their local chamber • Job Opportunities targeted at Young Migrants • More recognition for foreign qualifications, e.g., Filipino degrees. • More support in providing jobs and social benefits to single parents. • Skin colour can still be an issue for accessing job opportunities • Positive reports about employers and workplaces from Latvian community • Positive report about Local Enterprise Office from Polish Community • Some migrants will work in adverse jobs that Irish people are reluctant too. • Working migrants add value to an economy and pay taxes. • There is tourism dividend with families and friends of migrants travelling to Ireland to visit.

Table 3.1 Issues arising from the consultations

5. Promoting and Acceptance of Migrants in the Wider Community	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness and educate Irish public on the reality of migration in Ireland • Research causal factors for discrimination and tension • Identify best way to address discrimination and racism. • Orientation / Induction Of new migrants into Irish society. Improve access to information and appropriate induction for when migrants arrive – what they can and cannot do – A local to speak to when they need to know information. • Create multicultural events in towns and villages. • Introduction of new food cultures for migrants and locals. • More structured opportunities to meet local people. • Improve application processing and waiting times for granting asylum • Migrant Support Groups to see what sports migrants play and introduce locally • Promote the engagement of migrants in sports and arts development activities • Work with the Sports Partnerships to inform on guidelines on how clubs can become more integrated • Work with migrants to support their personal effectiveness to help build their confidence to participate in community development activities • Examine how Community Groups can recruit new volunteers from the migrant community • Continue to encourage integration and inclusion in cultural programming events and Activities such as through the museum. • Work with the Irish Equality and Human Rights Commission (IEHRC) to ensure the delivery of training programmes to local politicians on racism, discrimination and rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the engagement of migrants on youth-based organisations • Introduction of new music cultures from migrants • More involvement of migrants in the decision-making process within the social order • More amenities for Migrants. • More support from local Community Groups to facilitate integration • Enhance involvement of the Mayo Intercultural Action Group. • More similar organisations and workshops as Mayo Intercultural Action Group. • Improve communication and promotion of events • Develop ongoing needs assessments with migrants to continuously improve integration, services etc. • More empowerment to live independently and autonomous • Securing a Visa for a spouse is difficult • To encourage migrants to engage more were there is currently capacity in services specifically for their needs. • To identify factors of aversity to engage with services, e.g. fear and to propose tactics to resolve these issues. • To ease tensions concerning conflicting religious beliefs. • Create an awareness strategy for Mayo for the local population • Cultural diversity training • Skin colour can still be an issue for integration in society. • Expand culture of merit as factor in sports team selections • Initiatives to continually support migrants identity of origin while living in Mayo.

Table 3.1 Issues arising from the consultations

5. Promoting and Acceptance of Migrants in the Wider Community	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The findings indicate that cultures with high relatedness with Irish culture have more positive sentiments to their integration experiences. Polish community praised local politicians in making them feel at home Russian speakers said migrants should do more to get involved in the decision-making process in the social order of Ireland. 	<p>ENHANCING STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advancing the Resettlement Programmes Sharing knowledge of Karen Community success for good practice across disciplines. Advancing good Gardaí relationship with migrants Enhance open dialogue achievements. More awareness of Ballyhaunis success stories integrating its strengths into the wider county. Strong church community helps some migrants Good culture of women community groups which assist migrants. St Vincent de Paul very proactive with migrants Good community spirit and culture in County Mayo that many migrants admire and enjoy High satisfaction from polish community, who highlighted many similarities. Russian speakers who are Roman Catholic noted the advantages of relatedness to their integration The GAA was complemented by the Russian speakers for their inclusivity. With the Volunteer Centres run a campaign in multiple languages highlighting the benefits of volunteering

Table 3.1 Issues arising from the consultations

6. Addressing the Standard and suitability of Housing and Accommodation for Migrants	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to affordable housing so family can join them – most married men living in factory provided accommodation Appropriate housing for large families – e.g., case of small house 12 people in family Places for children to play Ease high levels of rent for those who leave direct provision. Encourage landlords to accept more migrants More access to affordable housing in general with an ease on large deposit constraints Improve the conditions and services within the Direct and emergency provision centres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the surplus of vacant houses in the county issue. Migrants are willing to renovate derelict houses to live in. Improve support and information on housing for those granted asylum. Improve liaison with service providers before placing migrants in locations to ensure adequate capacity for GP access etc. Improve wi-fi and internet availability in accommodations. Evenly distribute migrants throughout Mayo Mayo County Council have positive feedback in assisting migrants in accessing housing and accommodation.



3.2 SWOT of Migrant Integration Issues in Co. Mayo

Table 3.2 below provides a detailed analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis of migrant integration issues in Co. Mayo.

SWOT Analysis of Migrant Integration Issues in Co. Mayo	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful integration of Lithuanian, Polish, Russian speaking and Karen communities • Successful County of Resettlement Programme, • Public sector willing to engage with the migrant community locally. • Many skilled and qualified individuals among the migrant community • Local community is generally welcoming. • A community sector willing to engage with migrant communities. • There are many religious faiths and places of worship in the county. • County has a generally low rate of crime/ Strong community • Education standard high • Good quality of life and standard of living • An eclectic mix of community groups and NGOS in the county • Ballyhaunis success stories • Mayo County Council proactive in finding accommodation for migrants. • Social Protection good at signposting services • Local schools are welcoming for migrants. • Positive feedback on some employers and workplaces/there are employment opportunities locally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited information in different languages/limited translation services • Limited language courses to equip migrants access education/employment. • One size does not fit all - different services needed for different migrants • Migrant qualifications may not be recognised, necessitating retraining. • Limited signposting and communication of available services particularly for migrants with limited English. • Access to some services is challenging (e.g., GP care and childcare). Service rules and regulations can be complex for migrants. • There is limited awareness of cultural issues and differences among service providers and the wider community. • Few dedicated staff dealing with migrant issues. • The national asylum application process is cumbersome and slow. • Rules in direct provision centres pose challenges for asylum seekers. • EU migrants often unaware of different laws in different EU states. • Lack of induction briefing or information upon arrival. • Deficit of weekend services for working migrants. • Lack of interest among some migrants to get involved in community activities. • Integration success is mostly based on high cultural relatedness. Skin colour remains a discriminatory issue in accessing work, services, housing etc.

SWOT Analysis of Migrant Integration Issues in Co. Mayo	
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Migration Integration Strategy/ Communities Integration Fund • Interim Migrant Integration Forum constituted. • Build on learning from various Mayo projects with new communities. • Clustering of some migrant communities in some locations in the county • Learning from good practice elsewhere • Creation of an information portal that migrants can access/The development of one stop shops for information for migrants. • Supporting the younger generation of migrants become more integrated. • Entrepreneurial culture in county -growth in migrant entrepreneurship. • Skills shortage in Co. Mayo labour market • Potential to host multicultural events. Museum could act as a platform for events and activities for migrants. • Stock of derelict houses in the county • Migrants fill labour shortages in the Irish jobs market. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The housing crisis deepening in Ireland • Deficit of migrants involved in the decision-making process in the county. • Increases in levels of discrimination and racism in the county as a result of a changes in public opinion about migrants. • Gender based violence is an issue within the migrant population. • An exclusive focus on migrants without a focus on wider community integration • Negative media coverage • Continued issues in relation to language, access to housing, employment, training, public services, poverty, recognition of qualifications, childcare and transport • 'Race to the bottom' fears among some existing labour sectors in county. • Evidence of Covid-19 outbreaks more severe among some ethnic groups. • Ongoing Covid-19 lockdown has implications for well-being and integration. • Downturn in the world economy as a result of Covid-19 pandemic could result in reduced levels of funding for public services/reduced employment opportunities.

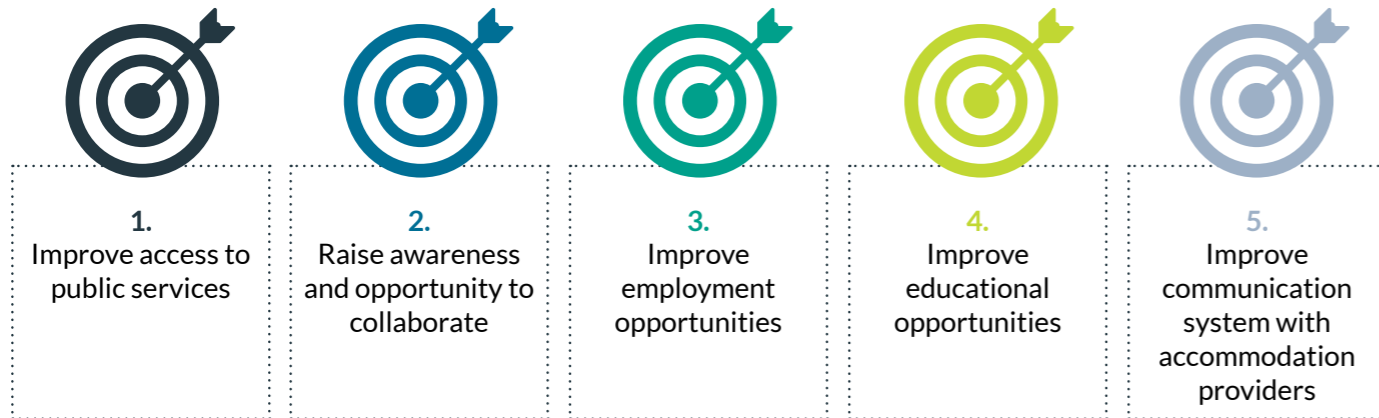


Section 4

Vision and Goals

Co. Mayo has adopted an amended version of the National Strategy vision and definition of Integration as a result of the consultation process.

The action plan covers a series of 15 actions clustered across 5 goals as follows:



Acronyms used in the Action Plan

- MCC - Mayo County Council
- ETB - Education and Training Board
- SOLAS - The Further Education and Training Authority
- LCDC - Local Community Development Committee
- LECP - Local Economic and Community Plan
- SWMDC - South West Mayo Development Company
- MNE - Mayo North East SICAP
- PPN - Public Participation Network
- LDCs - Local Development Companies
- DEASP - Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
- Mayo LEO - Mayo Local Enterprise Office
- RIA - Reception and Integration Agency
- HSE - Health Service Executive
- SICAP - the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme
- IEHRC - Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
- JPCs - Joint Policing Committees
- AGS - An Garda Síochána
- CYPSC - Children and Young People's Services Committee

Section 5

Action Plan for the Mayo Migrant Integration Strategy 2022-2026

This Action Plan has been mapped against The National Migrant Integration Strategy (NMIS) and the Mayo Local Economic and Community Plan to ensure complementarity.

GOAL 1 Improve access to public services					
Action No.	Action	Expected Output(s)	Timeframe	Lead Agency(s)	Partner Agency(s)
1.1	Provide cultural awareness, equality and diversity training for public service provider staff with the aim of improving access of public services to the migrant community.	Cultural awareness, equality & diversity training programme developed and delivered	2 training programmes delivered per year starting in 2022	All Mayo Migrant Interagency Forum members	All Mayo Migrant Interagency Forum members
1.2	Develop Participatory Democracy Forums to build capacity of Migrant Community to engage in the delivery and receipt of public & community services.	2 Forums created & supported	Begin in 2022	Mayo County Council (Community Section)	Mayo Women's Support Services & Safe Ireland; South West Mayo; Mayo Library; HSE; Mayo County Childcare Committee; Mayo Arts Office; NMI-Country Life; Gardaí; Tusla; Citizens Information Centre
1.3	Provide orientation and induction pack for new migrants arriving in Mayo. This pack to include customs and culture norms in Ireland and Mayo. Develop and maintain this information and make it available in a number of languages. Information to include directory of translation services available in the county.	Orientation pack developed and maintained	Begin in 2022	Mayo North East	Mayo Women's Support Services & Safe Ireland; South West Mayo; Mayo Library; HSE; Mayo County Childcare Committee; Mayo Arts Office; Gardaí; Tusla; Citizens Information Centre

Action No.	Action	Expected Output(s)	Timeframe	Potential Lead Agency(s)	Potential Partner Agency(s)
1.4	Continue to maintain & develop pathways into healthcare supports including translation supports.	Pathways to healthcare supports enhanced.	Evolving from 2021	HSE	South West Mayo; Mayo North East Tusla
1.5	Continue to provide targeted information for the migrant community about rights and entitlements of people living in Ireland with particular emphasis on access to transport, accommodation, health services, & gender-based violence services. Continue to maintain & develop provision of existing supports & advocacy services with people who require advocacy supports & representation, including vulnerable migrants such as asylum seekers, victims of gender-based violence / torture, single parents & people lacking English.	Targeted information developed. Advocacy supports developed.	Evolving from 2021	Citizen Information Centres / HSE	Mayo Women's Support Services & Safe Ireland; South West Mayo; Mayo North East; HSE; Mayo County Childcare Committee; Ballyhaunis Old Convent Parents; Gardaí; Tusla



GOAL 2 Raise awareness and opportunity to collaborate					
Action No.	Action	Expected Output(s)	Timeframe	Lead Agency(s)	Partner Agency(s)
2.1	Host an annual county wide Intercultural Day across secondary and primary schools in County Mayo and encourage schools to promote awareness of integration, diversity and interculturalism.	Intercultural event delivered	Begin in 2022	FRCs	Mayo Traveller Support Group; ; Foroige; CYPSC; Mayo Local Link; Mayo Library; Mayo Sports Partnership; Gardaí
2.2	Develop projects to celebrate the richness of migrant cultures and to support the delivery of the Mayo says No to racism campaign	Mayo says No to racism campaign	Begin in 2022	South West Mayo. / Mayo North East	Mayo Traveller Support Group; Mayo County Childcare Committee; Mayo Local Link; Mayo Library; Mayo Arts Office; Country Life Museum; Gardaí ; Tusla; PPN
2.3	Work with local media to promote 'good news stories' and positive coverage of migrants & asylum seekers playing a proactive role in society.	4 good news stories annually	Begin in 2022	South West Mayo. /Mayo North East	Mayo County Childcare Committee; Tusla; Ballyhaunis Old Convent Parents; PPN; Mayo Volunteer Centre.
2.4	Proactively seek to engage migrant youth involvement with youth-based organisations including sports clubs in the county and promote equality of opportunity in playing competitive sports.	Migrant participation up 10%	Begin in 2022	CYPSC	Foroige; Mayo Sports Partnership; Mayo County Childcare Committee; Gardaí; Tusla
2.5	Encourage migrant participation in both volunteering and decision making through targeted campaigns highlighting benefits to migrants.	Migrant participation up 10%	Begin in 2022	Mayo Volunteer Centres	South West Mayo; PPN; Mayo Traveller Support Group; Mayo County Childcare Committee; Mayo Sports Partnership; Ballyhaunis Old Convent Parents; Gardaí; Tusla.

GOAL 3 Improve employment opportunities					
Action No.	Action	Expected Output(s)	Timeframe	Lead Agency(s)	Partner Agency(s)
3.1	Encourage employers to utilise current labour market supports available such as JobsPlus, WPEP Scheme to increase employment opportunities for migrants and work with scheme sponsors to increase migrant participation rates on scheme such as CE and TUS.	Employer engagement up 10%	Begin in 2022	Department of Social Protection.	LES; Mayo Local Link; Mayo Arts Office; Local Enterprise Office.
3.2	Work with training and educational providers to provide opportunities for migrants to re-train, upgrade their qualifications, gain skills & work experience by providing information, access to training options and work experience.	Migrant participation up 10%	Begin in 2022	Department of Social Protection.	South West Mayo; Mayo Library; LES; Local Enterprise Office, Mayo North East



GOAL 4 Improve educational opportunities					
Action No.	Action	Expected Output(s)	Timeframe	Lead Agency(s)	Partner Agency(s)
4.1	Identify, signpost, and address gaps in basic conversational English language provision (e.g Fáilte Isteach Programmes) for migrants in Co. Mayo. Continue to support and resource services, currently operating in the county. Promote targeted uptake of English language classes among various migrant communities. Registration and assessment days for ESOL in Castlebar/ Wesport/Ballina/ Claremorris/Ballyhaunis. opportunity for accreditation.	Increase in accessible English language provision	Begin 2022	MSLETB	South West Mayo; Mayo Arts Office; FRCs; Tusla.
4.2	Deliver an anti-racism schools programme annually	2 programmes delivered annually	Evolving from 2021	Mayo Traveller Support Group.	Mayo County Council; Foroige; MSLETB; CYPSC; Gardaí

GOAL 5 Improve communication system with accommodation providers					
Action No.	Action	Expected Output(s)	Timeframe	Lead Agency(s)	Partner Agency(s)
5.1	Enhance engagement and communication systems between accommodation providers and the Migrant population regarding living conditions in the county.	Mechanism developed to improve engagement & communication regarding systematic recurring issues identified with living conditions in the county.	Begin 2022	Mayo County Council (Community Section)	Mayo County Council (Housing Section); Social Housing Providers; CIC; Gardaí; DSP.

Section 6

Implementing, Monitoring and Evaluating the Action Plan

During the development of this strategy and action plan it was stated by the consultees that the goals and actions should be realistic and achievable but yet stretching. The plan should be deliverable within the resources the core agencies that have subscribed to the plan as lead partners on actions, and with a view to working with others who can partner on specific actions which are outside of their remit and against which additional resources could be added or sought.

The Strategy should be a living document to which actions can be added or amended as new evidence emerges and experiences and circumstances change.

Going forward, it is intended that annual priority actions will be developed based on the action plan, and that the Community Section within the Council, in partnership with a wider Migrant Integration Forum will take a lead in co-ordinating the development of the plan. The Migrant Integration Forum will monitor and evaluate the plan.

A mid-term review of the strategy should be programmed for the second half of year two.



This strategy could not have been developed without the input of the people from new communities who have come to live and work in Mayo.

A special thanks is extended to all those who took the time to participate in the consultations.

The participation of organisations and individuals was critical to ensure that the strategy and action plan are achievable and ambitious.

Kathy & Allen of KW Research guided and developed the process of consultation and engagement both with the organisations and the Migrant population.

They ensured the consultation process and analysis were conducted in a professional and informed method. Their advice, expertise and input in developing the strategy were central to the realisation of the strategy and we thank them most sincerely.

The organisations and groups listed below have been central in getting the plan this far and have committed to the implementation during 2022 to 2026

- Citizen Information Centre
- Tusla
- Mayo Women's Support Services & Safe Ireland
- Mayo North East
- Karin Community
- Mayo Volunteer Centres
- National Museum of Ireland-Country Life
- Mayo Sports Partnership
- Mayo Public Participation Network
- Mayo County Council Libraries
- Mayo County Council Community Section
- Mayo Travellers Support Group
- South West Mayo
- Old Convent Residents; Direct Provision Centre
- Children & Younger Persons Services Committee
- Mental Health Ireland

- Mayo County Childcare Committee
- Department of Social Protection
- Ballyhaunis Old Convent Parents (Direct Provision Centre)
- Mayo Family Resource Centres
- Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board
- Health Service Executive
- Foroige
- Local Enterprise Office
- Local Employment Service
- Mayo Local Link
- Mayo County Council Housing Section
- Disability Federation Ireland
- Gardaí
- Tusla
- Mayo Arts Office



